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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [GH](#)
SUBJECT: GHANA CIVIL SOCIETY, CLERGY AND PARTY LEADERS
SHARE MESSAGE: "KEEP ELECTION PEACEFUL"

REF: ACCRA 01122

¶1. (U) Summary: Civil religious and political leaders have consistently called for peaceful elections and calm and reemphasized their message following recent incidents of violence in Northern Ghana that saw several killings and the destruction of property (REFTEL). The calls for calm are receiving wide coverage in Ghana's media. Earlier highly partisan rhetoric has been replaced, at least for now, by leaders' calls for tolerance and violence-free elections. End Summary.

¶2. (U) In recent days Ghana's major newspapers have featured prominent articles quoting civic, traditional, religious and political leaders from across the social and political spectrum calling for calm and peaceful elections. The Chairman of the University of Ghana Council warned students against being used by politicians to further illegal electoral activities. He was joined by the head of the Graduate Students Association of Ghana, who condemned the recent violence. Traditional leaders, including the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, asked Christians not to participate in violent electoral acts. (NOTE: The Asantehene is the traditional leader of the Ashanti people, and has all but endorsed New Patriotic Party candidate Nana Akufo Addo. END NOTE.). Other community leaders have also added their voices to the call for calm.

¶3. (U) President John A. Kufuor has asked the electorate to accept the outcome of the election. He said recently that "Professor Atta Mills is not my enemy and I do not think he considers me his enemy." (NOTE: Mills is the NDC candidate for President. END NOTE.) Representative of the youth wings of Ghana's four main parties met in Northern Ghana at a "Youth for Peaceful Elections" forum to discuss ways to avoid violence. The National Democratic Congress's National Campaign Chairman (and MP from the northern city of Tamale) asked NDC supporters not to seek revenge against those who attacked NDC supporters and property in his community.

¶4. (U) Comment: While incidents of violence have occurred, and likely will re-occur, there is wide support in Ghana for peaceful and transparent elections. Ghanaians are aware of the potential damage to the country's development from civil unrest, and a broad spectrum of opinion leaders appear to be working to calm tensions following recent incidents. End Comment.
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